

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY HOTEL MOTEL TAX BOARD  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025  
CENTURY CENTER, BENDIX ARENA**

**Members Present**

John Anthony	Jenny McNeil
Rob DeCleene	Paul Phair
Micki Kidder	Carmen Piasecki
Kurt Janowsky	Ron Zeltwanger
Mark McDonnell	

**Members Absent**

Gary West  
Kyle Willis

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Anthony. Casey Krempec conducted roll call.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

President John Anthony entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the 7/31/25 meeting. Jenny McNeil motioned to approve; Mark McDonnell seconded, motion carried.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

Ron Zeltwanger reported that the 2026 Budget of \$8,081,437 was approved by the St. Joseph County Commissioners. He reviewed the Hotel Motel Tax Funds Summary dated 9-30-25. The Hotel-Motel Tax Fund No. 7304 started the year with \$6,347,912; total receipts through 9/30/25 were \$5,244,794; disbursements were \$5,590,230; leaving a balance of \$6,002,476. In Q4 there remains to be disbursed \$516,207; receipts of \$2,000,000; with a 12/31/25 projected balance of \$7,486,269. Fund Cash Balances on 9/30/25 were: Mishawaka Sports Complex \$1,658,843; Potawatomi Zoo \$1,330,831; Morris Performing Arts Center \$1,179,019; Tourism Capital Investment Fund \$1,120,630. Q3 Receipts of \$2,371,020 was a record quarter.

John Murphy, St. Joseph County Auditor, reported to Zeltwanger that the State of Indiana is collecting the AirBnB for short-term rentals in the Innkeepers taxes. In Q1-Q2-Q3 \$2,380,398 were collected in taxes from short-term rentals (separate from the hotels.) In 2024 \$2,394,000 was collected.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

John Anthony reported that four of nine months in 2025 either tied or set new occupancy records. He thanked the entire hospitality community and the University of Notre Dame for football games and concerts; South Bend International Airport adding more destination cities and flights and construction in St. Joseph County. The Accelerate Indiana Municipalities Aim announced recently that the City of South Bend is the 2025 AIM Placemaking Award for the LINK Trail project.

Rob DeCleene presented on the Allocation Committee and reported that Jeff Jarnecke, Executive Director of Visit South Bend Mishawaka (VSBM) came to the Hotel-Motel Tax Board after the 3/31/25 meeting with an opportunity that the City of South Bend had presented. The ASM Global management of Century Center contract ends 12/31/25. The City is looking for a change to improve the operations of Century Center and is looking at VSBM as an option. Jenny McNeil, Carmen Piasecki, Rob DeCleene met with Aaron Perri and Jeff Jarnecke/VSBM. VSBM would take over management of Century Center, sales and marketing. Legends Global, a third party management company would be responsible for event management, facilities, food and beverage. There is the potential for net savings in annual operating expense of at least \$75,000; increased bookings and events with increased hotel room nights. The committee unanimously decided to pursue this and to enter into negotiations with the Civic Center Board of Managers to proceed with this opportunity and the new agreement would start 1/1/26. The City of South Bend would continue to own Century Center.

Discussion followed on Legends Global and if a Request for Proposal was issued. Jeff Jarnecke, Executive Director of VSBM, reported that Legends Global is a merger between ASM Global and Legends Hospitality. As ASM Global is the incumbent, VSBM wanted continuity and did not want to have too many changes all at the same time. The Agreement is for two years with a one-year renewal option. Legends Global has one or two operations in the state of Indiana.

## **AGENCY REPORTS**

### **VISIT SOUTH BEND MISHAWAKA**

Jeff Jarnecke reported on hotel occupancy through 9/30/25. Elkhart and LaPorte Counties are also receiving some of the benefits of Notre Dame football and events, youth sports, and construction projects near New Carlisle. Short-term rental room nights hit a record number of 239,398 vs 203,111 in 2024 and 171,797 in 2023. America's Youth on Parade (AYOP) will return in 2026

Ground has broken and the Miracle League Normain Park (a baseball field for all ability levels, water park, playground) in Mishawaka is under construction and should open in July 2026. The George Wilson Park year-round synthetic tubing runs in Mishawaka will also have a learn-to-ski hill and snowboarding hill will open in July 2026. Leeper Park Tennis Courts in South Bend are almost finished and will be ready to use in 2026. Beyers fields are almost done. The Yard on Hill Street should break ground later in 2025 and will open early 2027. Dog Leg Social which is the top golf concept at Juday Creek is out to bid.

The mobile piano at the South Bend International Airport welcomed Notre Dame fans on football weekends. Micki Kidder commented that when she returned to the airport the previous night, people all ages stopped under the welcome arch to take photos. Mark McDonnell commented that Mark Turner, owner of South Bend Chocolate Company, would appreciate support to have the company continue operating at the airport.

VSBM worked with the Notre Dame womens basketball team and the City of South Bend to feature "The Bend" on the team shirts. A South Bend highlights video was created to show at games as the team takes the court. The South Bend Irish Jam was held 10/3/25 at Eddy Street Commons. The Irish Eat partnership with Notre Dame received the Chicago/Midwest Emmy award for Outstanding Achievement for Sports. The Tailgate N' Tallboys 8/14-15/26 Country Music Festival will be held at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds with 24-25 Country artists, camping/hotel packages and an anticipated crowd of at least 25,000 people.

The VSBM agreement to manage Century Center effective 1/1/26 would be for 5 years with a 5-year option. VSBM would have oversight. Legends Global would handle F&B, event operations and building management. VSBM will present an investment strategy to the board in 2026

Jarnecke welcomed Becky Fletcher to VSBM as Senior Director of Sales. She will lead the efforts in county-wide sales. Several sales positions will be added to facilitate sales at Century Center.

### **MISHAWAKA SPORTS FIELDHOUSE**

Tony Stearns, General Manager, and Nick Kleva, Director of Events, Marketing and Sponsorship, reported that the Mishawaka Sports Fieldhouse has been open for one year. The Mishawaka Midwest Open had 300 players in 27 Divisions representing 11 states (IN, MI, IL, OH, CO, FL, NJ, N, OR, TX, and WI.) The MFH Candy Crawl 10/28/25 had an estimated 1,500 trick-or-treaters. The Flag Football Clinic had 26 participants led by David Grimes Adult Volleyball Tournament had 20 teams. Northern Indiana Volleyball Association (NIVA) has 1,100 players on 110 teams; Girls Limited has 267 players on 27 teams; Girls National has 152 players on 15 teams; Boys Travel has 29 players on 3 teams;

Boys Rec has 40 players on 4 teams; Fall clinics had 660 players; adult league has 31 teams. 5Star Basketball has Fall clinics: Ball Handling has 27 players; Fall league has 103 players; YDL Session 1 had 42 players; YDL Session 2 had 124 players; and AAU Teams had 40 girls on 4 teams and 44 players registered. Mishawaka Fieldhouse Pickleball is focusing on growing pickleball memberships; Courtney Clark was hired as Head Pickleball Pro; 101 classes with 12 players. Canes has 3 baseball and 9 softball Fall teams. Mishawaka Fieldhouse Soccer Turf has adult league with 150 players on 10 teams and adult and youth soccer leagues are at capacity with 500+ players on 48 teams.

5Star Basketball Mishawaka Madness Tournament 11/15/25 is expecting 50 teams. January – July 19 of 30 weekends are contracted with tournaments (9 NIVA Volleyball weekends; 4 outside volleyball tournaments; 7 basketball tournaments and 1 Futsal Tournament in July) and are waiting on 5 contracts to come back.

### MORRIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Dezha Moore, Manager of Venues, reported that Morris Capital Fund 416 Q3 Revenue was \$123,593; and Expenses of \$6,692,685 which includes the new Raclin Murphy Encore Center. The Morris Operation Fund 602 Q3 YTD had Revenue of \$849,457 and Expenses of \$405,631. The Morris Box Office 725 Liabilities Account is \$1.4 million. Ticket sales revenue was \$2,090,930 with the theater was dark August – October and the end of the year will be strong.

New Whispers from the Past Ghost Tours were held during the theater dark period with 9 sold-out tours; 180 attendees; and total revenue of \$3,000. Public ghost tours will continue annually each fall. Music in Common presented “The Black Legacy Project” at the Century Center Bendix Theatre. The VPA Foundation sponsored 50 tickets and Lynn Coleman sponsored 16 tickets for high school students.

Upcoming shows include: Dav Pilkey and Dog Man: A Guinness World Records attempt on 12/9/25 to have the most attendees dressed as Dog Man. The Enchanted Kingdom Ball and Fantasy Faire 11/7-8/2 is the second highest grossing event that is currently for sale. Straight No Chaser returns 12/17/25. Hadestown 12/19-21/25 is the first Broadway show of the 25-26 season.

The Morris had 1,119 room nights in Q3 and 28,000 visitors. There were 7.9% of visitors coming from a downtown hotel and 7.4% of visitors going to a downtown hotel.

Photos were shared of construction of the new Raclin Murphy Encore Center at the Morris PAC. The Encore Center and Equity in the Arts logo and branding are being developed. Space rental, food and beverage fees and lounge operations are being confirmed. Grand Opening events are being planned. Two goals for the Encore Center are to enhance patron experience (Grand Lobby concessions and bars will move to the Encore Center, Equity in the Arts Gallery exhibit open before shows and during intermission; more restrooms; sensory room and breastfeeding chair; Royal Box, Side Box and Loge Box bar/concession seat service with QR codes; self-service ticket kiosk; and sensory room) and community engagement (monthly gallery exhibits; Music on the 3<sup>rd</sup>; educational workshops, The Art of Improv; networking events.).

Discussion followed on what percentage of the 8% hotel-motel tax goes to the Morris. One half of 1% of hotel-motel tax money is allocated to the Morris to help fund capital projects.

**CENTURY CENTER**

Dezha Moore reported Q3 Revenue of \$543,021 and Expense of \$50,626. The Hotel-Motel Tax Board Capital Fund 670 is \$500,000 for 2025 and \$800,000 for 2026. Quotes are coming in for capital projects (2,000 new banquet chairs and kitchen exhaust system) to start projects in 2026.

Operations Fund 670 Revenue is \$756,148; Expense of \$1,150,086 with net Loss of -\$393,937. Four annual events were lost in 2025 due to tariffs, and clients operational hurdles, however, have been confirmed to return in 2026. Guest counts in 2025 were unexpectedly lower than normal.

YTD 2025 Room Nights 15,484; Century Center visitors 178,152. Projected 2025 Room Nights is 17,296; 2026 projected Room Nights is 16,136. Barletta University event has 600 attendees with 700 Room Nights; American Cornhole Tournament has 400 attendees and 200 Room Nights;;ATA Martial Arts has 800-1,000 attendees with 200 Room Nights.

**OLD BUSINESS**

No old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Jenny McNeil motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ron Zeltwanger seconded, and motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:23 am.

JA:MES